Countering Pakistan's false propamda in Islamic countries

1125. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN. Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFF.AIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the steps taken by ijt>/e-rriment to counter the false propaganada by Pakistan in Islamic Countries regarding- Kashmir and the conditions of Muslim* in India;

(b) whether Government are contiaer-ing to send a strong delegation 01 pni-ant Mirslims from different walks of the to Islamic Countries to counter the Pakistani propaganda; and

(c) if 10, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Countering Pakistan's anti-|India propaganda in the Islamic countries is an ongoing process. Tre Government Mid the Indian Missions continuously monitor such activities, particularly relating to Kashmir and the conditions of Mus-lirrig in India. Swift, comprehensive and effective action is taken to counter Pakistan's false and motivated propaganda. Factual information is regularly provided to decision makers; the media; and the Governments of these countries through the Indian Missfcms. abroad as •well as through the Missions of the Islamic countries in India. The Governments of these countries are also briefed during visits of high level delegations to India and from India to these coimt-rio*.

(b) There is at present no proposal to send a delegation, comprising only jaromtaent Muslim personalities, to the Islamic Countries.

(a) Does not arise.

Foreign tours of the President and officials of ICCR

1126. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number or foreign tews uude»-taken by the President and the omcia.ts of the Indian Council for Cutural jieu-tions in 1993 and 1994 (t.J uatej stating the names of the coum.ies visited and the purposes of their visits;

(b) what is the expenditiui incjxreu by the President and the ofhc.als o- the ICCR on each foreign trip; ajd

(c) what are the achievements of chess
foreign tours?

THE MINISTER OF STATE_ IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AW AW (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHELii..: (a, and (b) The foreign tours unacKok. n by the president and the official of the Indian Council for Cultural the lions (ICCR) are as follows:

1993

(i) President, ICCR toured abroad on two occasions and visited Austria, .Japan and Thailand.

(ii) Director General, ICCR ouied abroad on nine occasions and visited South Africa, Mauritius, Egypt, United Kingdom, USA, Hungary, Austria, France, Russia, Israel, China and Japan.

(iii) Private Secretary to the Pie-dent, ICCR toured abroad on one occasfcn land visited Austria.

(iv) Assistant Private Secretary to President ICCR toured abroad on one occasion and visited Japan and Thailand.

1994

(i) President, ICCR toured abroad on one occasion and visited Urited King-dom and France,

(ii) Dy. Director General (programines,), ICCR toured abroad on one occasion and visited Egypt,

(iii) Assistant Private Secretary T*o* Pre-sident^ ICCK toured abroad on one occasion and visited United Kingdom and France.

The purpose of their visits and the expenditure incurred on these vises is as per Annexure. *(See appendixe* 171, Annexure No. 24]

(c) The achievements of these foreign tour$_s$ are as under:

The tours abroad hav$_e$ facilitated establishment of new cultural links leaved and strengthened the existing cu.uiral relations and enhanced mutual understanding of India and other countries and institutions abroad. The visits nave enhanced cultural exchanges at the institutional level and at the bilateral level facilitating people to people contact.

The tours abroad by President, ICCR and the officials of the ICCR have unilateraly given opportunities to ney tiate steps and measures to further His objectives of ICCR as defined in the Memorandum of Association when the iCCR was established in 1950.

The visit$_s$ abroad have facilitated a better understanding and appreciation abroad of Indian art and culture a. J put forth an image of India in the in.ernational community fulfilling its endeavour to continuously enhance peop.e to people contact with an open at:tude while being receptive to the cultures of other countries.

The visits abroad have provided a supporting role for exchange programmes with all friendly countries. The periodio visits and meetings with heads of cultural departments, organisations, institutions, scholars intellectuals and policy makers are necessary in view of the emphasis on implementation of formal reciprocal arrangements for cultural exchanges contained fa the Cultural Exchange Protocols.

Protection of Hindu temples in Vietnam

1127, SHRI S. MADHAVAN. WILL the minister of AFFAIRS At-'FAlRS be pleasea to stale:

(a) whether it is a fact that the jewels and properties OR. Hindu temples in Vietnam are in tue custody of the National Bank, of Vietnam; and

(b) if so, what steps are taken by our embassy to help toe management of Hindu temples to recover those properties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHBED): (a) The jewels and some other items of Saigon Thendayudhapani Temple belonging to the Chettiar Community who left Saigon in the wake of the fall of Saigon in 1975, has been lying in the custody of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of HO Chi Minh City.

(b) The properties have been retained in the custody of the industrial and Commercial Bank and not handed over to the temple management committee, *a$* per the wishes, of the Chettiar Commjniiy.

US Counsul-GeneraTs comment on Economic policies of West Bengal

1128. SHRI ASHOK MITRA-. WiU the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the comments recent ly made by the Consul-General of the United States of America at Calcutta openly criticising the economic and indu strial policies of the Government of West
Bengal;

(b) whether it is within the preview of a foreign diplomat to offer such pub lic comments on our internal affairs; and

(c) whether Government will ask the US administration to make proper amends for thiS breach of etiquette on the part of its representative?